

CLAIMS

1. A method of producing an immunogen, which method comprises polymerising a hirudin and/ or a hirudin-like protein.

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the hirudin and/or the hirudin-like protein are/is polymerised with glutaraldehyde.

3. A method according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the hirudin is HV1 (SEQ ID NO:1), HV2 (SEQ ID NO:2), HV3 (SEQ ID NO:3), P1 (SEQ ID NO:4) or P2 (SEQ ID NO:5).

4. A method according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the hirudin-like protein is a derivative of HV1 (SEQ ID NO:1), HV2 (SEQ ID NO:2), HV3 (SEQ ID NO:3), P1 (SEQ ID NO:4) or P2 (SEQ ID NO:5) by way of amino acid substitution, deletion, insertion, extension, functionalisation or chemical modification, said derivative having anti-thrombin activity.

5. An immunogen comprising a polymerised hirudin and/or hirudin-like protein.

6. An immunogen according to claim 5 wherein the hirudin is HV1 (SEQ ID NO:1), HV2 (SEQ ID NO:2), HV3 (SEQ ID NO:3), P1 (SEQ ID NO:4) or P2 (SEQ ID NO:5).

7. An immunogen according to claim 5 wherein the hirudin-like protein is a derivative of HV1 (SEQ ID NO:1), HV2 (SEQ ID NO:2), HV3 (SEQ ID NO:3), P1 (SEQ ID NO:4) or P2 (SEQ ID NO:5) by way of amino acid substitution, deletion, insertion, extension, functionalisation or chemical modification, said derivative having anti-thrombin activity.

8. An immunogen according to claim 5, 6 or 7 obtainable by polymerising the hirudin and/or the hirudin-like protein with glutaraldehyde.

9. A method of producing an antibody capable of binding to a hirudin or a hirudin-like protein, said method comprising raising antibody against an immunogen as claimed

in any one of claims 5 to 8.

10. A method according to claim 9, wherein the said antibody is a polyclonal antibody.

5 11. A method according to claim 9, wherein the said antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

10 12. A method for the quantitative determination, purification or identification of a hirudin or a hirudin-like protein, said method comprising raising antibody against an immunogen as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 8, and using the antibody thereby obtained in said quantitative determination, purification or identification.

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